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FM AMEMBASSY ABUJA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5888
INFO RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 1226
RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 0245

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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT PASS USAID FOR GH/HIDN, AFR/WA AND AFR/SD
BAGHDAD FOR DUNDAS MCCULLOUGH

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KFLU](#) [AEMR](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [KFLO](#) [TBIO](#) [KSAF](#) [KPAO](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#)

AMGT, MG, NI

SUBJECT: MGSF01: NIGERIA SAYS IT HAS NO SWINE FLU

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED - NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION OUTSIDE OF U.S.
GOVERNMENT

1. (SBU) Contacts at the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Health and Avian Flu Lab scientists employed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) concur that there are currently NO/NO confirmed cases of swine flu in Nigeria. As a precaution to an outbreak of swine flu, the Government of Nigeria (GON) has issued an alert and assured Nigerians through the press that measures are in place to tackle a possible epidemic. CDC, USAID and WHO are working with the local Avian Influenza (AI) Technical Working Group to develop a swine flu specific national response plan. The Technical Working Group, experienced in influenza control measures from previous avian flu outbreaks in Nigeria, consists of experts from the Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Defense, and Information and the Nigerian Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and considers the current threat level for Nigeria as very low. AgAttach reports that some neighboring countries are restricting trade of pork products due to fears associated with swine flu despite the fact that swine influenza is not transmitted by pork or pork products. Nigeria has a long standing ban on pork products for market protection reasons, but allows in swine for breeding.

2. (U) The Ministry of Health and the Avian and Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Control Center have issued swine flu alerts to federal, state and local health authorities to heighten surveillance and monitoring of flu-like and respiratory diseases, particularly among normally healthy young adults. Other activities such as inventorying of protective equipment and anti-viral treatment drugs are also taking place.

(3)(U) Minister of Health Professor Babatunde Osotimehin in a statement issued to the press on the night of April 27 stated that surveillance has been strengthened at all ports of entry into the country and at the local, state and federal government levels. He also stated that the government is in consultation with international health organizations on the matter, adding that the GON was fully prepared to contain any outbreak of the flu with adequate stockpiles of Tamiflu, the drug of choice for treatment. He urged all clinicians and health workers to report any suspected case of swine flu to his ministry.

4. (SBU) The Avian Influenza Technical Working Group is preparing a draft strategy for the AI Steering Committee's approval. (Note: the AI Steering Committee is led by the President and consists of the Ministers of Health, Agriculture, Information and Defense and the Director General of the National Emergency Management Agency. End Note). The strategy is to review the current AI national response plan and incorporate measures to tackle a potential swine flu outbreak. The plan will outline means for increased surveillance and laboratory tracking of the flu, and improved

information flow to clinicians and the public on danger signs of the disease and available medical care.

¶5. (U) Mission will monitor the situation closely and report any changes.

¶6. (U) This cable was coordinated with Consulate Lagos.

SANDERS